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Paeonia mlokosewitschii

MOLLIE-THE-WITCH is a perennial. Native to eastern central Caucasus it has sweetly fragrant, pale yellow flowers with many golden stamens.

It is also known as Caucasian peony, Lemon peony, Molly the witch, Paeony, and *Piwonia mlokosiewiczza* (Polish).

Mlokosewitschii commemorates a Polish soldier and naturalist-forester, Ludwik Franciszek Mlokosiewicz (1831-1909), who when he joined the Russian army in 1853 was posted to Lagodekhi in eastern Georgia in the south-eastern Caucasus. Here, for his regiment, he planted a water garden, park and orchard. On resigning his commission in 1861 he explored the Persian deserts and when he returned home was greeted, erroneously, with accusations of inciting Poles to rebel against Russian rule when serving in eastern Georgia. Despite his innocence he was convicted and, in addition to six years' confinement to the province of Voronetz south of Moscow, he forfeited his botanical collection. Upon his release in 1876 he explored the Daghestan mountains in the northern Caucasus then in 1878 he made a second visit to Persia. He settled down, after the latter exploration, and spent the rest of his life in the Lagodekhi region where he became an Inspector of Forests and collected botanical and zoological specimens for foreign museums.

This perennial is a fairly popular garden ornamental in Europe and North America.